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The Kentucky Warbler

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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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THE COVER

KOS thanks Laura Patton for this photograph of the male Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*), one of a number of individuals banded in 2004 as part of a University of Kentucky study following up a Golden-winged Warbler atlas project in south-eastern Kentucky in 2003 (see accompanying article, p. 73).

Spring Season 2004

Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., and Lee McNeely

Weather conditions during the season were rather average overall, but below normal precipitation occurred early in the period. Relatively normal early spring temperatures yielded to well above normal readings during the last three weeks of May, resulting in a disappointing lack of fallouts of spring migrants after the first week of May. Violent storms across much of the northern half of the state during the last week of May likely disrupted some nesting activities.

The highlight of the season in the rarities department was – pending Kentucky Bird Records Committee acceptance – a first state record for Yellow-billed Loon. Other noteworthy rarities included a Pacific Loon, a California Gull, and continuing Little Gull, Spotted Towhees (2) and Harris's Sparrow. Baird's Sandpiper – typically a rare spring migrant – was reported on four occasions in mid-April. Two *Selasphorus* hummingbirds became the first ever known to survive a Kentucky winter! Black-necked Stilts and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers continued their recent trends by appearing in multiple locations again this year. And finally, Bachman's Sparrows were again found in good numbers in the Trigg County portion of Fort Campbell Military Reservation.

Publication of any unusual sightings in the seasonal report does not imply that these reports have been accepted as records for the official checklist of Kentucky birds. Observers are cautioned that records of out-of-season birds and all rarities must be accompanied with good details or documentation for acceptance. Documentation must be submitted to the Kentucky Bird Records Committee (KBRC). Decisions regarding the official Kentucky list are made by the KBRC and are reported periodically in *The Kentucky Warbler*.

Abbreviations – County names appear in *italics*; when used to separate dates, the “/” symbol is used in place of “and”; “ph.” next to an observer's initials indicates that the observation was documented with photograph(s); “vt.” next to an observer's initials indicates that the observation was documented on videotape; “*” next to an observer's initials indicates that written details were submitted with the report; Ano = Ano surface mine, Pulaski; Ballard WMA = Ballard WMA, Ballard; Barkley Dam = Barkley Dam, Lyon/Livingston; Big South Fork = Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, McCreary; Birmingham Point = Kentucky Lake at Birmingham Point, Marshall/Lyon; Black Mountain = Black Mountain, Harlan; Blood River = Blood River embayment of Kentucky Lake, Calloway; Camp #9 = Peabody Camp #9 Mine, Union; Camp #11 = Peabody Camp #11 Mine, Union; DBNF = Daniel Boone National Forest; Jonathan Creek = Jonathan Creek embayment of Kentucky Lake, Marshall; Ken Hopewell = Ken Hopewell Unit Peabody WMA, Ohio; Ky Dam = Kentucky Dam, Livingston/Marshall; Ky Dam Village = Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park, Marshall; KDFWR = Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; Ky Lake = Kentucky Lake, Marshall/Calloway/Livingston/Lyon/Trigg; Kuttawa = Lake Barkley at Kuttawa, Lyon; Lake Pee wee = Lake Pee wee, Madisonville, Hopkins; LBL = Land Between the Lakes, Lyon/Trigg; Little Lick = Little Lick Recreation Area, DBNF, Pulaski; Lake Barkley = Lake Barkley, Livingston/Lyon/Trigg; Long Point = Long Point Unit Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge, Fulton; Lower Hickman Bottoms = Lower Hickman Bottoms, Fulton; Mammoth Cave = Mammoth Cave National Park, Edmonson (unless otherwise noted); McElroy = McElroy Lake, Warren; Meng's Pond = Meng's Pond, Warren; Minor Clark = Minor Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan; Obion = Obion WMA, Fulton (unless otherwise noted); Paradise = Paradise Power Plant impoundments, Muhlenberg; Peabody = Peabody WMA, Ohio/Muhlenberg (unless otherwise noted); Petersburg = Petersburg, Boone; Rock Bridge = Rock Bridge, DBNF, Wolfe; Sauerheber = Sauerheber Unit of Sloughs WMA, Henderson; Sinclair = Sinclair Unit Peabody WMA, Muhlenberg; Surrey Hills Farm = Surrey Hills Farm, ne. Jefferson; Waitsboro = Waitsboro Recreation Area on Lake Cumberland, Pulaski; Walton's Pond = Walton's Pond, s. Warren; West Ky = West Ky WMA, McCracken; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

Greater White-fronted Goose: latest report was for 1 at Ballard WMA 12 April (SR).

Snow Goose: the most interesting reports included 1 at Owsley Fork Lake, *Madison/Jackson*, 8-10 March (PH) and 6 Blues in *Campbell* 8 March (FR); the continued presence of a blue-morph bird at Minor Clark in late May (LH) suggests that the late summer-early fall 2003 bird was injured or resident and not an early fall arrival.

Ross's Goose: only report was for 1 at Barkley Dam 21 March (RDn).

Tundra Swan: the flock at Sauerheber (assumed to be all Tundras) numbered 29 on 1 March (MMr) but they left the area ca. 4 March (MMr); 2 were observed in ne. *Fayette* 7 April (SM).

Wood Duck: a brood of 12 young was observed at Pumpphouse Pond, *Pulaski*, on the very early date of 9 April (RDn).

Gadwall: latest reports included 2 pair at Camp #11 on 6 May (BP); 3 males at Lake Peewee 10 May (BP, JDu); and 3 males and a female at Camp #11 on 18 May (BP, MMn).

Blue-winged Teal: peak count was a relatively unimpressive 60 at Jonathan Creek 28 March (HC).

Green-winged Teal: latest reports were for single males at both McElroy and Chaney Lake, *Warren*, both 9 May (DR).

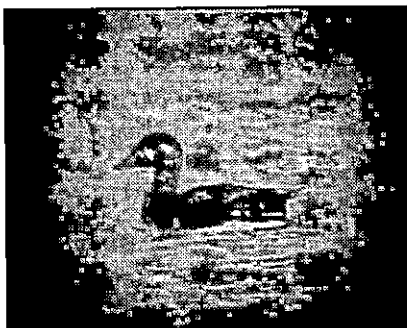
Redhead: the peak count of migrants was 40 in the Ohio River floodplain, e. *Daviess*, 5 March (DA); relatively late individuals included 1 at Camp #11 on 21 April (BP) and 1 there 18 May (BP, MMn).

Ring-necked Duck: 1-2 males that were certainly injured lingered at Camp #11 to 30 May (BP, AC).

Greater Scaup: only a few reports as follows: 1 in the Ohio River floodplain, e. *Daviess*, 5 March (DA); at least 15 at Green River Lake, *Taylor*, 7 March (RDn, HC); and at least 4 at Waitsboro 17 March (RDn).

Lesser Scaup: as is now the norm, 10+ birds (all or most likely injured) were still on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, into May (m.ob.); also reported were 1 at Lake Peewee and 1 at Camp #11, both 10 May (BP, JDu).

Surf Scoter: the only reports were for 3 at Green River Lake, *Taylor*, 7 March (ph. RDn, HC) and 1 on a pond at Hickman, *Fulton*, 17 April (ph.HC).



Surf Scoter, *Fulton*
17 April 2004
Hap Chambers

Black Scoter: certainly extraordinary were 3 birds (a male and 2 females) on Lake Herrington, *Boyle/Garrard*, 6 May (KP).

Hooded Merganser: interesting reports included a female at Sloans Crossing Pond, Mammoth Cave, 5 May (BP, MMn); 15 first-year birds at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu); and 2 broods of young at Ballard WMA 25 May (SR).

Ruddy Duck: several showed up during late April and early May at Camp #11 and at least 6 birds were still there 30 May (BP, AC).

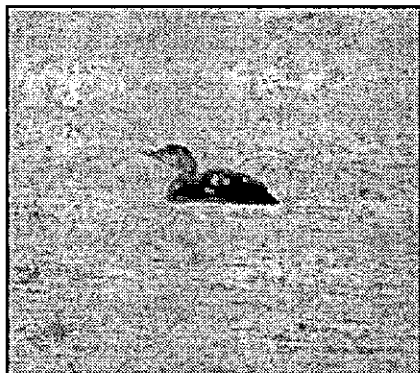
Red-throated Loon: there were an impressive number of reports including 1 probable adult on Ky Lake at Birmingham Point 13 March (BY, BP, AC) and 14 March (ME); a first-year bird on Ky Lake above the dam 14 March (BP, et al.) and 15 March (DR); and 2 on Ky Lake – 1 above the dam and 1 at Birmingham Point – 24 March (DR).

Pacific Loon: 1 bird was reported on Ky Lake at Birmingham Point 10 March (DR). KBRC review required.

Yellow-billed Loon: a probable first-year bird on Ky Lake at Birmingham Point 13 March (ph. BP, AC, BY) – 30 March (LPe) will represent a first state record if accepted. KBRC review required.

Common Loon: lingering birds included 1 at

Goose Lake, Sinclair, 6 May (BP); 1 at Petersburg 8/15 May (LM, et al.); 2 at Kuttawa 9 May (BP, JDu); 1 at Paradise 18 May (MMn, BP); and 2 (1 in basic plumage and 1 in alternate plumage above Ky Dam through 29 May (BP, AC).



Yellow-billed Loon, Ky Lake, Marshall
14 March 2004
B. Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Horned Grebe: peak count was 75-100 on Ky Lake, Marshall, 14 March (BP, et al.).

Red-necked Grebe: perhaps the same individual was observed on Ky Lake from the mouth of Little Bear Creek, Marshall, 10 March (vt. DR) to Ky Lake at Sherwood Shores, Marshall, 13 March (BP, AC) and Ky Lake at Birmingham Point 15 March (DR). KBRC review required.

American White Pelican: there were many reports during the period; of greatest interest were the following: ca. 20 at Swan Lake, Ballard, 4/9 March (SVi); a new state record count of 2000 at Mitchell Lake, Ballard WMA, 10 March with 1500 still there 11/12 March (SVi); nearly 400 on Linton Bay, Lake Barkley, Trigg, 14-15 March (fide MBe); 75 at Mitchell Lake, Ballard WMA, 16 March (SR); 17 over Long Point 7 March (KL); 96 at Blood River 22 March (HC). Reports of 1 at Paradise 11 April (BY) and 9 at McElroy 29 April (LD) were the easternmost for the season.

Double-crested Cormorant: 300+ were observed migrating over Hart 16 April (SK).

American Bittern: scattered reports included 1 at Sinclair 27 March (HC, RDn, ME), 11

April (BY) and 17 April (MSi); 1 at Sauerheber 18 April (DR, KOS); 1 w/ a broken wing at Camp #11 on 21 April (BP); 2 there 29 April (BP, JE); 1 at Long Point 1 May (BP, JE); 1 at Beech Grove Ridge, Pulaski, 5 May (RDn); 2 at Sinclair 7 May (BY); and 1 at Meadow Creek Swamp, Wayne, in early May (EH, fide MH).

Least Bittern: earliest reports included 1 at Long Point (KL, BLE) and 2 at Sauerheber (DR, KOS), both 18 April.

Great Blue Heron: a number of new colonies were reported during the spring season, full results of which will be published in a later issue as part of results of a statewide heronry survey that was conducted during the spring and summer of 2004.

Great Egret: earliest report was for 2 in w. Henderson 2 April (CC); a bird at Clifty Pond, Pulaski, 11 April was somewhat unexpected (RDn); peak count was 65 at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu).

Snowy Egret: earliest report was for 1 on Lake Barkley nr. Eddyville, Lyon, 10 April (J&PN); the most out-of-place transients included 1 at Paradise 6 May (BP) and 3 at Camp #11 on 10 May (BP, JDu).

Cattle Egret: unusual for Hart were 2 in flight 8 May (SK).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: earliest report was for 4 at Barkley Dam 21 March (RDn); also of interest were 4 at Lake Carnico, Nicholas, where the species is not regularly observed (G&WK).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: only reports for the season were for 1 at Highland Creek Unit Sloughs WMA, Union, 5 April (CC); 1 over St. Matthews, Jefferson, a few times in early May (BW); and 2 pairs nesting along Woodbine Drive, Lexington, in mid-May (TS, fide SM).

Osprey: earliest report was for 2 at Ky Dam 15 March (DR); there are now at least 4 nests along the Green River, Muhlenberg/Ohio (SVo, BP, JF).

Mississippi Kite: there were several reports of vagrant birds this spring including 2 over LBL at the head of Cravens Bay, Lyon, 30 April (JE, BP); 1 at Sinclair 6 May (BP) with 1 or 2 there 18 May (BP, MMn); 1 on

Fort Knox ca. two miles sw. of Westpoint, *Hardin*, 7 May (DD) with another or the same bird on Fort Knox on Lower Douglas Lake e. of Radcliff, *Hardin*, 26 May (KB, fide J&PB).

Bald Eagle: somewhat out of place was a sub-adult at Paradise 18 May (MMn, BP).

Northern Harrier: a bird at Ano 17 May (RDn) is suggestive of nesting; several territorial birds were observed at Sinclair 18 May (BP, MMn).

Broad-winged Hawk: earliest report was for 1 near Plano, *Warren*, 24 March (TD).

Rough-legged Hawk: there were a few reports of lingering birds at Sinclair 27 March (HC, RDn, ME); 9 April (BLi); and 11 April (BY).

Merlin: reports of presumed spring migrants included 1 at Bowling Green 11 March (DR); 1 at Shaker Mill, *Warren*, 18 March (DR); and 1 at Mammoth Cave 26 March (MMn).

Peregrine Falcon: there were a few reports including 1 in e. *Jefferson* 15 March (KCI); 1 of the local nesting pair on the Louisville waterfront 21 March (RDv, MW); an adult at McElroy 2 May (DR) and 5 May (BP, MMn); an adult at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu); and at least 1 of a pair frequenting a power plant in s. Indiana was observed on the US 231 bridge, ne. *Daviess* in late May (DA).

King Rail: 1 was observed at Sauerheber 18 April (DR, KOS) and 3 were heard there 29 April (BP, JE).

Virginia Rail: 4 were reported from Sinclair 27 March (HC, RDn, ME); a new state high count of 8 individuals was observed at Sauerheber 18 April (DR, KOS); also reported were 2 seen/heard at Camp #11 on 29 April (BP, JE) and 1 at Long Point 1 May (BP, JE).

Sora: peak count was 35+ at Camp #11 on 21 April (BP); a bird at Long Point 29 May (BLi) represented a new late departure date for the state.

Common Moorhen: 1 was heard along Terapin Creek, *Graves*, 1 May (CM); 1 was observed near Petersburg 8 May (LM, et al.); 1 was at Camp #11 on 18 May (BP,

MMn) with at least 2 there 30 May (BP, AC).

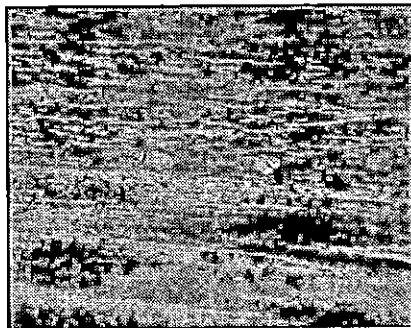
American Coot: birds lingered and likely initiated nesting at Camp #11 during May (BP, et al.).

Sandhill Crane: most birds moved through early, but a few lingered into March; a tardy flock of 23 birds was observed over e. *Jefferson* 19 April (BW); a bird with a broken wing was observed at McElroy 23 May and lingered there into June (DR).

Black-bellied Plover: earliest report was for 1 heard in w. *Fulton* 1 May (BP, JE); peak count was of 15 at McElroy 24 May (DR, NR); also reported were 2 at McElroy 3 May (DR); 2 at McElroy 5 May (BP, MMn); 1 at Camp #9 on 6/18 May (BP, MMn); 1 at Paradise 9 May (MSi); and 1 at McElroy 23 May (DR).

American Golden-Plover: there were only a few reports including 3 at Long Point 18 April (KL, BLE); 4 near Ellis Park, *Henderson*, 21 April (BP); and 2 in the Lower Hickman Bottoms, *Fulton*, 9 May (BP, JDu).

Semipalmated Plover: earliest reports included 1 in w. *Fulton* 17 April (HC); 1 at Long Point 18 April (KL, BLE); and 1 at Ballard WMA 18 April (SR); peak count was for 90+ at McElroy 24 May (DR, NR).



Piping Plovers, *Union*
29 April 2004
B. Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Piping Plover: 2 (a pair?) were observed at Camp #9 on 29 April (ph.BP, JE).

Black-necked Stilt: as is becoming the norm, there were a few scattered observations of migrants and/or vagrants as follows: 3 at

Sauerheber 15 April (DR) to 20 April (CC); 7 at Obion 1 May (BP, JE); and 1 at Boone Lake, Boone, 2 May (DMc) which represented a first for n.-cen. Kentucky.

Greater Yellowlegs: earliest reports were from w. Henderson 12 March (CC) and from Sauerheber 14 March (BY); peak counts included 128 at Long Point 20 April (KL, NM) and ca. 85 in w. Henderson 21 April (BP).

Lesser Yellowlegs: earliest reports were for w. Henderson 7 March (CC) and 3 at Long Point 14 March (BY); peak counts included 200+ at Long Point 18 April (KL, BL) and "hundreds" there 7 May (BY).

Willet: earliest report was for 2 at Waitsboro 21 April (RDn); also observed were at least 23 at Ky Dam Village beach 23 April (RDn, et al.); 2 at Ky Dam Village beach 24 April (m.ob.); 1 migrating n. while resting on drift on Lake Barkley, Trigg, 27 April (BLi); 10 at Kuttawa 30 April (BP, JE); 1 at Walton's Pond 2 May (DR), and 3 at Ky Dam Village 9 May (BP, JDu).

Spotted Sandpiper: earliest report was for 2 at Blood River 16 April (HC).

Upland Sandpiper: the only report was for 2 in McCracken 25 April (SR).

Ruddy Turnstone: the only report was for 1 at McElroy on the relatively early date of 30 April (DR).

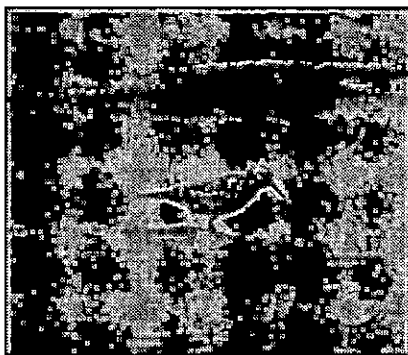
Semipalmated Sandpiper: earliest report was for 5 at Paradise 1 May (RDn); peak counts included 200+ at McElroy 24 May (DR, NR) and 105 at Camp #9 on 18 May (BP, MMn); 12 were still at Camp #9 on 30 May (BP).

Western Sandpiper: 1 was seen at Obion 17 April (HC).

White-rumped Sandpiper: earliest report was for 1 at McElroy 3 May (DR); also reported were 1 at Paradise 6 May (BP); 3-4 at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu); 5+ at Camp #9 on 18 May (BP, MMn); and 5 at McElroy 24 May (DR, NR).

Baird's Sandpiper: there was a significant movement of this rare spring shorebird across the w. part of the state during mid-April with the following reports: 1 at Blood

River 16 April (HC); 4 at Obion 17 April (HC); 1 at Ballard WMA 22 April (SR); and a loose group of 9 at Camp #9 on 21 April (ph.BP) that represents a new spring high count.



Baird's Sandpiper (1 of 9), Union
21 April 2004
B. Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Pectoral Sandpiper: peak counts included 500+ at Long Point 11 April (BY); 700+ in w. Fulton 17 April (HC); and 100+ at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu).

Dunlin: earliest report was for 1 at Long Point 11 April (BY); peak counts included 133 at McElroy 16 May (MSi) and 35 near Sauerheber 18 May (RDv); also reported were 4 at Long Point 18 April (KL, BL) and 6 there 20 April (KL, NM); 1 at Camp #9 on 21 April (BP) and 29 April (BP, JE); 1 at Paradise (BY) and 7 in sw. Warren (DR), both 30 April; 1 at Paradise 1 May (RDn); 1 at McElroy 5 May (BP, MMn); 10 at Camp #9 on 6 May (BP); 6 at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu); 6 at Camp #11 on 10 May (BP, JDu); 20-30 at Camp #9 on 10 May (BP, JDu); 4 at Petersburg 15 May (LM) with 2 still there 16 May (LM); 1 at Camp #9 on 18 May (BP, MMn); and 4 at McElroy and 1 at Walton's Pond 24 May (DR, NR).

Stilt Sandpiper: earliest report was for 1 at Walton's Pond 11 May (DR); peak count was for 12 near Sauerheber 18 May (RDv); also reported were 1 at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu) and 6 at Walton's Pond 14 May (DR).

Short-billed Dowitcher: few reports for this spring; all are included: 2 at Long Point 20 April (KL, NM); 3 in Trigg 2 May (BLi); some of 30 dowitchers at McElroy 5 May

gave Short-billed call notes (BP, MMn); 1 seen/heard at Obion 9 May (BP, JDu); 3 seen/heard at Camp #11 on 10 May (BP, JDu); ca. 60 total were present at McElroy/Walton's Pond/Meng's Pond 11 May (DR); 5 at McElroy 12 May (DR); 1 at McElroy 14 May (DR); 22 at Petersburg 15 May (LM) with 6 still there 16 May (LM); and 2 at McElroy 18 May (DR).

Long-billed Dowitcher: earliest report was for 1 at Sauerheber 27 March (vt.BY); peak counts included 22 at McElroy 25 April (DR) and 14 at McElroy 3 May (DR); also reported were 5 at Paradise 29 April (BP, JE); 1 (by visual characters) in *Trigg* 2 May (BLi); 1 in w. *Henderson* near Sauerheber 2 May (BY); some of 30 birds at McElroy 5 May were identified by sight as Long-billed (BP, MMn); 1 in e. *Trigg* near Gracey 3 May (BLi); 1 at Camp #11 on 6 May (BP); at least 3 at Long Point 7 May (BY); and 4 at Walton's Pond 9 May (DR).

Wilson's Snipe: 2 were still at Meng's Pond 5 May (BP, MMn).

American Woodcock: relatively impressive was a count of 24 birds at Ano 2 March (RDn).

Wilson's Phalarope: only reports were for 2 birds at both McElroy and Walton's Pond 5 May (BP, MMn).

Franklin's Gull: the only reports were for an adult at Ky Dam 23 April (DR) and a first-year bird at Ky Dam Village marina 25 April (KOS).

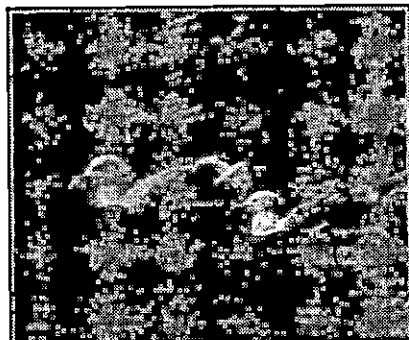
Laughing Gull: the only reports were for 2 at Kentucky Dam Village 24 April (KL); 1 adult at Calvert City 25 April (BP, AC); and 1 adult at the Falls of the Ohio, *Jefferson*, 18 May (MMn, BP).

Little Gull: the first-year bird that was found on Ky Lake above the dam in February lingered to at least 17 March (BP, MMn). KBRC documentation already submitted from winter 2003-2004.

Bonaparte's Gull: 400-500 on Lake Cumberland at Lees Ford dock, *Pulaski*, 16 March (BP, EC, RDn) was a rather impressive concentration; only a few were around Ky Lake and Lake Barkley 24-25 April (KOS).

Ring-billed Gull: ca. 150 were still at the Ky Dam Village marina 1 May (BP, JE) but only 4 were still there 30 May (BP, AC).

California Gull: an adult at Ky Dam 17 March (MMn, ph.BP, MSi) was observed by many individuals through 29 March (TD). KBRC review required.



California Gull (w/ Herring Gull)
Ky Lake at Ky Dam, 17 March 2004
B. Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Herring Gull: at least 150 and possibly 200, mostly first-year birds, were still in the vicinity of Ky Dam 17 March (BP, MMn, MSi); 17 sub-adults were at Ky Dam marina 1 May (BP, JE); 1 second-year was still at Ky Dam Village marina 29 May (BP, AC); and 1 first-year bird was at Camp #9 on 30 May (BP, AC).

Thayer's Gull: only reports for the spring season were for a first-year bird below Ky Dam 21 March (RDn, JW); a first-year bird at Ky Dam 24 March (DR); and an "immature" below Ky Dam 29 March (TD).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: all reports are listed: 1 adult below Ky Dam 8 March (HC); 1 adult and 1 first-year bird below Ky Dam 10 March (DR, et al.); 1 first-year bird below Ky Dam 13 March (BP, AC); 1 adult above Ky Dam and 1 first-year bird below Ky Dam 17 March (BP, MMn, MSi); 1 adult below Ky Dam 19 March (MO); 2 at Ky Dam 24 March (DR); 1 adult at Kuttawa 27 March (BY); and 1 at Ky Dam 23 April (DR, KL, BLi).

Glaucous Gull: 1-2 first-year birds continued from winter as follows: 1 at Birmingham Point 10 March (DR); 1 above Ky Dam and 1 on Ky Lake at Sherwood Shores, *Mar-*

shall, both 13 March (BP, AC); 1 above Ky Dam 14 March (BP, et al.); 1 on Ky Lake at the mouth of Little Bear Creek, *Marshall*, and 1 above Ky Dam, both 15 March (DR); 1 below Barkley Dam 17 March (BP, MMn); 2 above and below Ky Dam 17 March (BP, MMn, MSi); 1 on Ky Lake at the mouth of Little Bear Creek, *Marshall*, 24 March (DR); 1 above Ky Dam 27 March (BY); and 1 at Birmingham Point 29 March (TD).

Caspian Tern: earliest reports were record early birds at Ky Dam 27 March (BY) and Jonathan Creek 28 March (HC); peak count was 44 at Ky Dam Village beach 25 April (KOS); 3 were still at Ky Dam 29 May (BP, AC).

Forster's Tern: 52 had returned to Blood River by 28 March (HC); also reported were 25 at Calvert City 25 April (BP, AC) and 32 on Lake Barkley at Green Turtle Bay, *Lyon*, 1 May (BP, JE).

Least Tern: 4 birds were at Calvert City, *Marshall*, and 1 bird was above Ky Dam, both 29 May (BP, AC).

Black Tern: incredibly, this species went unreported during the season.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: 6-8 in Lovelaceville, *Ballard*, 17 March, and have apparently been there for some time (fide RHo).

Black-billed Cuckoo: the only reports were single birds at Mt. Zion, *Pulaski*, 27 April (RDn); in LBL, *Trigg*, 3 May (BLi); near Fisherville, e. *Jefferson*, 8 May (AL, BW); at E.P. "Tom" Sawyer State Park, *Jefferson*, 12 May (J&PB, BBC); and at Hancock Biological Station, *Calloway*, 15 May (VR, MBI).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: earliest reports included 1 at Cherokee Park, Louisville, 24 April (HS, BW, BBC) and in w. *Henderson* 25 April (CC).

Common Nighthawk: earliest report was from Bowling Green 26 April (FB).

Chuck-will's-widow: an interesting report of an apparently late migrant was 1 in e. *Jefferson* 20 May (J&PB); likely a county nesting record was a bird on 2 eggs just ne. of Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park, nw. *Fleming*, 19 May (HH, et al.).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: earliest reports were for 1 at Science Hill, *Pulaski*, 11 April (RDn) and 1 in s. *Warren* 15 April (JE).

Rufous Hummingbird: the adult female that wintered s. of Bowling Green was last seen 7 April (ph.JE, DE). KBRC documentation already submitted from winter 2003-2004.

***Selasphorus* sp. hummingbird:** the probable adult female that wintered in Lexington was last observed 24 March (ph. RS).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: the only report was for 1 near Blue John, *Pulaski*, 12 May (RDn).

Alder Flycatcher: the only report was for 1 at Ano 19 May (RDn).

Willow Flycatcher: earliest reports were for 1 at Sinclair 7 May (BY) and 1 at Little Lick 8 May (SM, RB).

Least Flycatcher: an impressive count of 17 presumed territorial males were heard and observed at and near the summit of Black Mountain 9 May (BY).

Eastern Kingbird: earliest report was for 1 at Kuttawa Springs, *Lyon*, 10 April (J& PN).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: the Grand Rivers, *Livingston*, pair was first observed (nest building) 24 April (BP, AC) and the female was incubating 29 May (BP, AC). One to 2 birds were also present below Barkley Dam from 4 May (BLi) into June. Another individual was reported at Murray, *Calloway*, 21 May (CP, fide HC). KBRC review required for *Calloway* record; others reviewed from previous years.

White-eyed Vireo: earliest report was for 1 at Sinclair 9 April (BLi).

Bell's Vireo: earliest report was for 1 at Camp #11 on 6 May (BP) with a pair there 10 May (BP, JDu); also reported were birds at Homestead Unit Peabody WMA, *Ohio*, and Sinclair 7 May (BY).

Blue-headed Vireo: earliest reports included a record-early bird at Yahoo Falls, DBNF, *McCreary*, 17 March (RDn), 1 at Rock Bridge and 1 at Natural Bridge State Resort Park, *Powell*, both 20 March (FR); and 1 at Little Lick 24 March (RDn); a relatively impressive count of 8 was tallied at West

Ky 26 April (SR); 1 + 2 (a pair?) were observed at Mammoth Cave 5 May (MMn, BP); an extremely late migrant was at Surrey Hills Farm 17 May (BP, J&PB).

Philadelphia Vireo: this species did not seem to be numerous this spring with only a few reports including 1 at Long Point on the extremely early date of 18 April (KL, BLE); 1 at Miles Park as early as 27 April (BW); 1 in sw. *Jefferson* 8 May (CLa); 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 12 May (BLi) and 2 at Surrey Hills Farm 17 May (BP, J&PB).

Red-eyed Vireo: earliest report was from Blood River 7 April (ME).

Fish Crow: earliest reports included 1 over Ragland, *McCracken*, 8 March (SR); several at Long Point 14 March (BY); and birds heard at Ky Dam 21 March (HC, et al.); also reported were 1 at Jonathan Creek 9 April (HC); a bird in LBL, *Trigg*, 15 April (BLi) which was in an area the species has not been previously reported; 2 heard s. of Hardy Slough, *Sauerheber*, 21 April (BP); and 2 heard at Cypress Creek Swamp, *Marshall*, 25 April (BP, et al.).

Common Raven: a new nesting site was found on Paintsville Lake WMA, *Morgan*, in mid-April (RHa, fide CLo); 2 birds, maybe 4, were observed at Black Mountain 9 May (BY).

Purple Martin: earliest reports included 1 at Bowling Green 2 March (DR); 3 in *Marshall* 3 March (HC); and 4 in s. *Logan* 3 March (MBe).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: earliest reports were for singles in *Wayne* 20 March (RDn, SBC) and at Kentucky Dam Village 21 March (HC, et al.).

Cliff Swallow: earliest reports included 15-20 birds at Barkley Dam, 17 March (MMn, BP) setting a new early arrival date for the state, and 1 at Ky Dam 21 March (RDn, et al.); colonies were reported on the Licking River at Butler, *Pendleton*, and Claysville, *Harrison* - both new counties - in mid-May (GM).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 2 were seen at the Rock Bridge nesting area 20 March (FR); last reports of lingering birds included 1 at Bee Rock, DBNF, *Pulaski*, 11 April (RDn,

SD, JDe) and 1 at Louisville 17 April (JE).

Bewick's Wren: the only report for the spring season was from the *Scott* yard n. of Stamping Ground where a pair nested two years ago; the male was seen/heard the last week of April and again 26-27 May (LB).

House Wren: earliest report was from *Harrison* 4 April (fide SM).

Sedge Wren: 1 at Sinclair 13 March (BY), 27 March (RDn, HC, ME), 11 April (BY) and 17 April (MSi), and 2 there 9 April (BLi), may have been wintering birds; other reports included 1 at Golden Pond, LBL, *Trigg*, 23 April (BLi); 1 at West Ky 26 April (SR); 1 at *Sauerheber* 2 May (BY); and 2 at Surrey Hills Farm 11 May (BP, JDu) that lingered into late May (BP).

Marsh Wren: 1 at Winchester, *Clark*, 13 March (MBo) may have wintered; 1 at Sinclair 27 March (RDn, HC, ME), 2 there 9 April (BLi) and 1 there 11 April (BY) likely wintered; other reports included 1 in w. *Henderson* 15 April (DR); 3 heard at Camp #11 on 21 April (BP); 1 at Long Point 1 May (JE, BP); and 1 at *Sauerheber* 2 May (BY).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: earliest reports were for singles at Lake Cumberland WMA, *Pulaski*, (RDn) and 1 at Mammoth Cave, *Barren* (MMn), both 26 March.

Gray-checked Thrush: a relatively impressive count of 10-15 birds was tallied in LBL 12 May (MBi).

American Pipit: peak counts included 150+ at Long Point 14 March (BY) and up to 125 in *Ballard* 25 April (SR); 20 were still at Willow Pond, *Fulton*, 20 April (KL, NM) and 1 was still at McElroy 5 May (BP, MMn).

Cedar Waxwing: continuing a trend of recent years, the species was scarce until May and did not become abundant until the second week of the month.

Blue-winged Warbler: earliest reports were for single birds at Louisville 17 April (JE); in *Boone* 19 April (KCa); and in *Hart* 19 April (SK).

Golden-winged Warbler: earliest report was for 4 males in LBL, *Lyon*, 30 April (BP,

JE); also reported were 1 at the Pinnacle, Cumberland Gap, *Bell*, 1 May (MMn); 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 2 May (BY); 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 3 May (BLi); 1 male in LBL, *Lyon*, 7 May (BY); and at least 5 males and 2 Brewster's hybrids at a newly discovered breeding site on Jellico Mt, *Whitley*, in early May (LPa) and 8 May (BP, JDu).

Tennessee Warbler: 100+ were seen/heard in LBL, *Lyon*, 30 April (BP, JE).

Orange-crowned Warbler: the only reports were for the season were 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 17 April (BLi) and 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 24 April (BP).

Nashville Warbler: earliest report was for 2 at Louisville 17 April (JE).

Northern Parula: earliest reports included 4 in LBL, *Trigg*, 30 March (BLi) and from w. *Henderson* 5 April (CC).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: earliest reports included singles in LBL, *Lyon*, 24 April (AC) and at West Ky 26 April (SR); a probable breeder was observed on Jellico Mt., *Whitley*, 8 May (BP, JDu); an impressive count of 58 was tallied at Black Mountain 9 May (BY); even more impressive was a count of 39 (most or all on territory?) tallied along the crest of Pine Mountain, *Harlan*, 13 May (SS, JK et al.) where the species has been known to occur in summer only since 1989.

Cape May Warbler: the species was considered fairly numerous at several locales during the first week of May (m. ob.).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 1 was at Gunpowder Creek Nature Park, *Boone*, May 2 (LM); a relatively impressive count of 20 was tallied at Black Mountain 9 May (BY).

Black-throated Green Warbler: earliest reports included a record-tying bird at Rock Bridge 20 March (FR) and 3 at Little Lick 24 March (RDn); an impressive count of 52 birds was tallied at Little Lick 10 April (RDn).

Yellow-throated Warbler: earliest reports were for 1 at Jonathan Creek 28 March (HC) and 3 in LBL, *Trigg*, 30 March (BLi).

Pine Warbler: a count of 30 birds was tallied in the Red River Gorge area, *Powell/Menifee/Wolfe* 19-21 March (FR).

Palm Warbler: relatively late was a bird in LBL, *Lyon*, 13 May (SR).

Blackpoll Warbler: earliest report was for 2 in LBL, *Lyon*, 24 April (BP, AC).

Cerulean Warbler: a relatively impressive count of 15 birds was made near Blue John, DBNF, *Pulaski*, 12 May (RDn); an even more impressive count of 27 was tallied along the crest of Pine Mountain, *Harlan*, 13 May (SS, JK et al.).

Black-and-white Warbler: earliest report was for 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 30 March (BLi).

American Redstart: earliest report was for 2 at Louisville 20 or 21 April (RDv).

Prothonotary Warbler: earliest report was for 1 at Blood River 7 April (ME).

Worm-eating Warbler: earliest report was for 1 at Louisville 17 April (JE).

Swainson's Warbler: 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 24 April was not near a known breeding location (BP, AC); also reported was 1 at Cumberland Gap, *Bell*, 1 May (MMn).

Northern Waterthrush: earliest report was an exceptionally early individual in w. *Henderson* 9 April (CC).

Louisiana Waterthrush: earliest reports included singles near Canton, *Trigg* (BLi) and at Hematite Lake, LBL, *Trigg* (J&PB), both 23 March; and 1 at Mammoth Cave 26 March (MMn).

Connecticut Warbler: as is typical, a small number of birds was reported from scattered localities including 1 at Shaker Mill, *Warren*, 9 May (DR); 1 at Tom Wallace Lake, sw. *Jefferson*, 11 May (CLa); 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 11 May (MBi) that was farther w. than most published records; 1 heard at Gunpowder Creek Nature Park, *Boone*, 15 May (LM); and 1 at Surrey Hills Farm 17 May (BP, J&PB).

Mourning Warbler: there were only a few reports including 1 at Mammoth Cave, *Barren*, 5 May (BP, MMn); 1 at Surrey Hills Farm 11 May (BP, JDu); and 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 13 May (SR).

Hooded Warbler: earliest report was for 1 at Little Lick 10 April (RDn).

Canada Warbler: earliest report was from

Mammoth Cave 4 May (DD); latest report was for 1 seen/heard at Surrey Hills Farm 31 May (BP).

Scarlet Tanager: earliest report was for 1 at Bee Rock, DBNF, *Pulaski*, 11 April (RDn).

Spotted Towhee: the male that was present in w. *McCracken* during the winter was last observed 17 April (SR). KBRC documentation already submitted from winter 2003-2004.

Bachman's Sparrow: earliest report at Fort Campbell, *Trigg*, was for 28 April (DM); by late May, at least a dozen territorial males were accounted for there, including the location of an active nest (DMo, et al.).

Chipping Sparrow: wintering birds blended with early migrants in early March, but 3 at Lexington 6 March (RM) may represent early migrants as they had not been observed previously. An early fledgling was observed in *Calloway* 26 April (HC).

Lark Sparrow: the species was reported only at Fort Campbell, *Trigg*, where 1-2 individuals were observed at no less than four locations (DMo, et al.).

Savannah Sparrow: an apparently lingering migrant was late at McElroy 24 May (DR).

Grasshopper Sparrow: earliest report was for 1 at Sinclair 11 April (BY); a count of 26 birds at Ano 17 May was relatively impressive (RDn).

Henslow's Sparrow: earliest report was for 1 heard singing at Surrey Hills Farm 27 March (BP); also reported were 1 or 2 at Beech Grove, *Pulaski*, 8 April (RDn); the species had returned to Sinclair in numbers as of 9 April (BLi); 5-6 were heard at a new location near Lawrenceburg, *Anderson*, 11 April (CLa); a count of 15 birds at Ano 19 May was relatively impressive (RDn, BS); a nest w/ 4 eggs was found at Sinclair 18 May (MMn, BP).

LeConte's Sparrow: only reports were for single birds at Sinclair 13 March (BY) and 27 March (HC, RDn, ME).

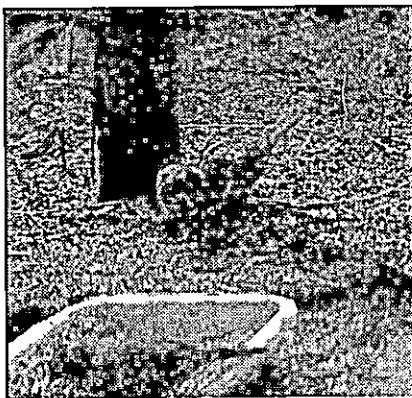
Lincoln's Sparrow: an unusually early migrant (or perhaps a wintering individual) was observed at Mammoth Cave 26 March (MMn).

White-throated Sparrow: quite tardy was a lingering individual at St. Matthews, *Jefferson*, 22 May through the end of the month (BW).

Harris's Sparrow: the wintering immature at Lovelaceville, *Ballard*, lingered to 5 May (RHo). KBRC documentation already submitted from winter 2003-2004.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: earliest report was for a bird at a feeder in *Jessamine* 22 April (DWe); 1 along the crest of Pine Mt, *Harlan*, 13 May, could have been either a migrant or summer resident (SS, JK et al.).

Blue Grosbeak: earliest reports were for single birds in *Hart* 22 April (MSu) and w. *Henderson* 25 April (CC).



Harris's Sparrow, *Ballard*
17 March 2004
Mark Monroe

Dickcissel: earliest report was for 1 at Sinclair 17 April (MSi).

Bobolink: earliest report was for 6 in w. *Fulton* 17 April (HC); peak count was for ca. 120 birds in w. *Fulton* 1 May (BY); probable territorial males were observed near Danville, *Boyle*, 4 May (DWa, DP) and outside of Harrodsburg, *Mercer*, 5 May (DP).

Rusty Blackbird: peak counts included 800-1000 in scattered flocks in w. *Henderson* (BY) and 200+ at Long Point (BY), both 14 March.

Brewer's Blackbird: the only reports for the season were for 3 at the WKU Farm, s. *Warren*, 6 March (DR) and 21 near Petros, sw. *Warren*, 11 April (DR).

Baltimore Oriole: earliest report was for 1 at Frankfort 17 April (BP).

Purple Finch: good numbers of birds lingered through March with 25 at Short Creek, Grayson (JP) and 20 in rural Hart (SK) by the end of the month and 6+ at Berea, Madison, 15 April (PH); a few individuals lingered to record late dates, probably at least in part due to the presence of conjunctivitis

infections. Two birds were still present near Fisherville, Jefferson, as of the end of May (E&JH) and a female was still at a feeding station in Trigg 29 May (BLI, PL).

Pine Siskin: the only reports of lingering birds/spring migrants were 2 at Mammoth Cave 26 March (MMn) and 1 heard over Jellico Mt., Whitley, 8 May (BP, JDu).

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GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER AND BLUE-WINGED WARBLER ON RECLAIMED SURFACE MINES IN EASTERN KENTUCKY

L.L. Patton, S. Vorisek, and J.L. Larkin

The Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) is a declining neotropical migrant songbird of the eastern United States and Canada. Breeding populations inhabit a variety of natural and human-created early successional woodland habitats (Confer 1992). Annual population declines of as much as 7.6% have been attributed to habitat loss, nest parasitism by the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), and interspecific competition and hybridization with the Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pumila*) (Gill 1980, Confer 1992, Confer and Larkin 1998, Confer et al. 2003, Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2003). Currently, the Golden-winged Warbler is a species of special concern (Confer 1992) and is under review by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Historically, summering and presumed breeding Golden-winged Warblers were considered rare and primarily restricted to the higher elevations of Black Mountain, Harlan Co., in southeastern Kentucky (Mengel 1965). However, in more recent years, the species has been documented

from additional sites in and near the Cumberland Mountains (Croft 1969, J. Larkin unpubl. data, Palmer-Ball 2003). One record from Harlan County in 1981 involved the observation of an adult feeding a fledgling, the first definitive evidence of breeding ever reported for the state (Palmer-Ball 1996). Over the past three years Golden-winged Warblers have also been observed in the Daniel Boone National Forest in McCreary County in areas managed for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers (*Picoides borealis*) and damaged by pine beetles (Stedman 2003). This area is a short distance north of known breeding locations in Scott County, Tennessee (Lesley Bulluck, pers. comm.). The recent observations of Golden-winged Warblers in McCreary County may be a result of the Tennessee populations expanding into Kentucky, although it is also possible that they have been inhabitants of the area all along (Stedman 2003).

The Golden-winged Warbler Atlas Project (KDFWR 2003), a cooperative effort between the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and Cornell Lab of Ornithology, was conducted in order to identify populations of Golden-winged Warblers in Kentucky and locate potential habitats for conservation where Blue-winged Warblers are absent. As part of the Atlas Project, a total of 162 points were surveyed in suitable, early successional habitats from 10 May to 15 June 2003 using 10 minute playback songs of Golden-winged and Blue-winged warblers. Surveys at the 162 points yielded a total of 16 Golden-winged Warblers, 62 Blue-winged Warblers, and 5 hybrids (3 Brewster's and 2 Lawrence's). Golden-winged Warblers were identified in Bell (4 individuals), Harlan (5), McCreary (1), Pike (5), and Whitley (1) counties. All except one Golden-winged Warbler were observed on reclaimed surface mines. The exception was a bird observed in the aforementioned area of the Daniel Boone National Forest in McCreary County at 427 m. Interestingly, despite the presence of some hybrid individuals, segregation between populations of Golden-winged and Blue-winged warblers was found to occur in most areas. Occurrence of Golden-winged Warblers on reclaimed surface mines ranged from 393-783 m, but the majority were identified above 660 m. Blue-winged Warblers were observed from 264 to 825 m. Golden-winged Warblers were never observed in small patches (< 2.02 ha) of early successional forest, even if the habitat appeared suitable. They were mostly observed in large, contiguous areas of early successional vegetation. Blue-winged Warblers did utilize habitat patches < 2.02 ha in size, but the majority were also observed on larger areas. Although the emphasis of the Atlas Project was to document simply the presence of Golden-winged Warblers, anecdotal observations strongly suggest that the species continues to breed in Kentucky. While no nests were found, on one occasion a male and female responded to the playback songs, and on a separate occasion a male was observed carrying food.

The occurrence of breeding Golden-winged Warblers on reclaimed surface mines in eastern Kentucky presents an opportunity for research and conservation of this rapidly declining songbird of early successional habitats. Surface mining has created approximately 219,000 hectares of reclaimed shrubland/grassland habitat in Kentucky since 1984 (Environmental Quality Commission 1997). Delayed succession of these areas due to poor soil quality maintains this type of habitat over a much longer period than forest openings or abandoned farmland. Surface mines that are properly reclaimed may be a valuable habitat source for the Golden-winged Warbler and serve as colonization areas for a species that has experienced declines throughout much of its historical range. Additionally, there appears to be a degree of habitat segregation between the Golden-winged and Blue-winged warblers in Kentucky. Management to maintain/promote segregation may reduce interspecific competition and hybridization between these two species. Ultimately, such management activities may prevent local extirpation of Golden-winged Warblers, which has occurred in some portions of its range. One potential concern that must be investigated is the effect that Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism may have on the fledging success of Golden-winged Warblers and

other bird species associated with the fragmented landscape created by surface mining. It is important to determine whether reclaimed surface mine habitats support viable bird populations, or serve as population sinks. Research is currently underway at the University of Kentucky and the University of Tennessee to address habitat needs, productivity, and several other aspects of Golden-winged Warbler and Blue-winged Warbler ecology on reclaimed mineland habitat.

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FIELD NOTE

Late Nesting Grasshopper Sparrows in Clinton County

On 16 August 2003 we found a pair of Grasshopper Sparrows (*Ammodramus savanna-rum*) in a grassy field a few kilometers east of Albany, Clinton County, Kentucky. As we watched, one of the birds flew to a fence post approximately 8 meters from us and perched on top of the post. As we viewed the bird, we immediately noted that it was carrying a large green insect in its mandibles. Stedman was able to obtain documentary photographs of the bird carrying the insect. Despite our presence, the sparrows remained close by, and the bird carrying the insect did not consume it while we observed for several minutes, leading us to conclude that it was carrying food for young, a standard means of confirming the nesting of many songbirds. We did not search for a nest or fledged young of this species because we did not want to inadvertently disturb them. We watched for a few minutes to see if one of the adults would go to a nest or young, but neither did so.

Mengel (1965) indicates that Grasshopper Sparrows may complete clutches as late as early August. While reviewing the nesting phenology of Grasshopper Sparrow, Palmer-Ball (1996) cites Mengel's dates for clutch completion and late nesting without adding to them, presumably because no additional data were available at that time. However, Palmer-Ball and McNeeley (*Ky. Warbl.* 1:15, 2004) cite a record of a nest with small young found in Muhlenberg County 13 August 2003 as being a "relatively late nesting record." Thus, it would appear that the observation described above is noteworthy as another late nesting record of this species, especially since there were no confirmed or probable nesting records of Grasshopper Sparrow obtained for Clinton County during the Kentucky breeding bird atlas project (Palmer-Ball 1996).

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Kentucky Bird Records Committee

Rare bird sightings and birds observed out of season should be well documented and the documentation should be sent to Lee McNeely, Secretary of the KBRC, P.O. Box 463, Burlington, Kentucky 41005, for consideration by the committee for official state record status.

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Visit the Kentucky Ornithological Society's web page at www.biology.eku.edu/kos.